

Equipping the Army with new systems of Guns

† 917. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether with a view to increase its striking power, Government have formulated any plan for the army to provide new type of helicopters and new systems of guns, to increase its mobility in the battlefield;

(b) if so the details thereof;

(c) the latest position of this scheme; and

(d) by when this scheme is proposed to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The Army has planned acquisition for new generation, technologically advanced helicopters during the 11th and 12th Plans to enhance its battlefield mobility and striking power in support of field formations. Such helicopters include Advance Light Helicopters (Utility Version), Advanced Light Helicopters (Weapon System Integration), Tactical Battle Field Support Helicopter and State-of-the-art Attack helicopters. These Helicopters are planned to be acquired in a staggered manner and the acquisition will be as per the extant Defence Procurement Procedure.

As regards guns, 155 mm/52 Caliber Wheeled and Tracked SP Guns are planned to be procured. 155 mm/52 Caliber Towed Guns are presently undergoing trials. As and when these guns are inducted, the fire power and mobility in the battlefield would be enhanced.

Bilateral Defence Cooperation between India and Russia

918. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether talks between India and Russia were held recently for strengthening bilateral defence cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the details of agreements signed between the two countries;

(c) whether Government have decided to access the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS); and

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RAJYA SABHA

(d) if so, the details thereof and the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. K. ANTONY) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Sixth India-Russia Inter Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation took place on 24.1.2007 in New Delhi.

(b) During the meeting both sides reviewed progress of the on-going bilateral defence cooperation and discussed various issues of mutual interest in the areas of defence and security. The following Agreement/ Protocols were signed on conclusion of the meeting:—

- (i) Inter Government Agreement on license production of RD-33 aeroengines in India.
- (ii) Protocol of Intent for co-development and co-production of Multi Role Transport Aircraft.
- (iii) Protocol on the Sixth meeting of India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation.

(c) and (d) During the recent visit of the President of the Russian Federation to India, the Governments of India and the Russian Federation signed two agreements with regard to access to the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) data.

Setting up of Aerospace Command

919. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the decision regarding setting up of aerospace command has been pending with Government for a long time;

(b) if so, what are the impediments coming in the way towards setting up of aerospace command; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that many panels had recommended Government on the importance of setting up of aerospace command, to counter any threat to the country's space based assets?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) There is no decision of the Government to set up Aerospace Command.